

Education Committee

Evening Classes

Starting January, the Education Committee is offering three evening classes at Sha'ar Zahav.

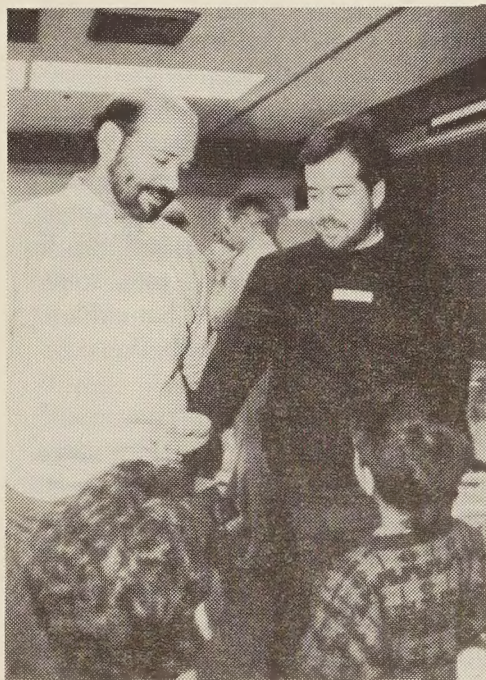
- **Back to the Sources II: the Midrash**, taught by Rabbi Kahn. Delving into the language of the rabbis, this class will explore how the rabbis "filled the gaps" in biblical narrative answering questions like "What really happened at the Red Sea?" Using the popular work, *Back to the Sources*, students will examine the Midrash from the perspective of its authors and ourselves as modern readers. Rabbi Kahn's class will meet for six Tuesday nights beginning January 23, 7:30-9 at Sha'ar Zahav. This class is free to CSZ members, \$20 for non-members.

The following two classes are offered at Sha'ar Zahav in conjunction with Lehrhaus Judaica.

- **Introduction to Judaism Part I: Classical Judaism and Religious Practices.** This is a survey of Jewish theology, sacred literature, prayer, holidays, and life cycle. It is designed for those wanting to enhance their basic knowledge of Judaism as well as those with no knowledge of Judaism. The course, taught by Rabbi Dan Dorfman, executive director of the San Francisco Hillel Foundation, will meet for 10 Tuesday nights starting January 30 at Sha'ar Zahav 7:30-9.

- **Modern Jewish Philosophies.** Under the direction of Phyllis Mintzer, students will explore the different approaches of the major movements within modern Judaism to basic philosophical questions. Students need not have a background in Judaism or Jewish thought to take this course. This 10-session class will meet Wednesday nights beginning January 31 from 7:30 to 9 at Sha'ar Zahav.

Sha'ar Zahav members can enroll in the joint Lehrhaus Judaica/Shah'ar Zahav classes for a special reduced fee of \$35 per course. Call the CSZ office for registration information.



Kaiser Brunch—Ralph Frischman, Eric Keitel, and the kids. Photo by Michael Bettinger. See page 5 for more photos.

It's Not Too Late!

As all members who haven't been traveling in the Amazon River Basin these past few weeks may have realized, the Long-Range Planning Committee's long-awaited questionnaire has arrived in your mailbox. The planning maven tell us that a 20 to 25 percent response is all we can expect. Well, as in so many other areas, Sha'ar Zahav is different. To date, 44 percent of our members have responded. But, of course, we have even higher expectations. Although the deadline for the drawing of the gift certificate has passed, we want *your* views about our past and future. We hear plenty from many of our more active members, but we particularly value input from those of you who are less involved. If you've misplaced the survey, call the office for a replacement. So join the masses and return your questionnaire in the convenient postage-paid envelope. It's not too late!

A Tale of Six Cities

Imagine, for a moment, that to build a synagogue like ours we had to obtain permission from the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Imagine further that when permission was denied, as it surely would, gay and lesbian Jews could worship together only if we left out the Shema, the Amidah, and the Kaddish.

What if we could do nothing for people with HIV infection in a Jewish context without the approval of Lionel Feldman—the rabbi without portfolio or congregation, who led the fight against the domestic partners initiative?

Sound like a nightmare? It is. But for progressive Jews, it's one from which we can awaken. We needed no one's approval to create Sha'ar Zahav. We brought it into being and we, its members, freely determine its character and activities. Our faith teaches us that no Jew has religious authority over any other Jew. As Reform Jews we give tradition a voice in our theology and practice—but not a veto.

Such, unfortunately, is not the case in Atlanta. I had the opportunity to meet members of conservative and fundamentalist faith traditions at a conference in November who are doing AIDS work without the sanction or approval of their denominational leaders. For them, our bad dream is a reality.

The conference, held at the Carter Center, was convened by the AIDS Interfaith Network (CSZ member Andy Rose is one of the founders and serves on the AIN board). The goal of the conference was to bring together representatives of all Protestant denominations, plus Roman Catholics, Unitarians, Moslems, and Jews. In one day together we would share our experiences, and help each other enlist the leadership of our respective communities in the fight against AIDS. Unfortunately we were only partially successful. There simply wasn't enough time to do what needed to be done.

Continued on page 3

Being in an Interfaith Relationship

The December holidays have passed; menorahs have been put away, Christmas trees are appearing on street corners awaiting the trash collector's truck, and for the next few weeks, most of us will still be putting "1989" on our checks.

The December holidays were different this year at my house. While we lit the menorah and chanted the prayers, cooked and consumed the latkes (and brisket), and spun our many dreidels, as in years past, we also bought and decorated a Christmas tree.

You see, I'm a member of an interfaith couple; my lover, Lee, is an active Episcopalian. The year I served as president of Sha'ar Zahav, she was senior warden (comparable to vice president) of her church. Just as I participate in Sha'ar Zahav activities, Lee regularly attends church services, serves on committees and helps raise money. Some of our friends wonder how we balance our commitments to such different religions, but it's really not very hard. We are both deeply spiritual, and more importantly, we respect each other's faiths and traditions.

Or so I thought. Oh, I do not question Lee's support for my involvement in Sha'ar Zahav and my Judaism. All signs have been quite to the contrary—we have repeatedly celebrated Chanukah, Pesach, Shabbat and many other Jewish holidays in our home. Lee occasionally attends services with me and has taught herself to read Hebrew in order to follow along. Furthermore, I'm proud to say, she's one of Sha'ar Zahav's first true "friends" of the congregation (a non-voting member, active in another faith, who nevertheless pays full dues).

Rather, I've begun to question my own support for her involvement with her church and religion. Beyond dyeing Easter eggs, Lee has never brought Christianity into our home (and dyeing Easter eggs is hardly a Christian tradition; it's quite pagan). Was it because I actively discouraged it? I never recall saying "don't celebrate your holidays at home." Perhaps my lack of words spoke louder than any words could have.

This past holiday season I took a long hard look at the spiritual side of the woman with whom I've shared the better part of 10 years, who has openly and joyously celebrated my Judaism with

me, yet I have not done the same with her. I, of course, realize that it's easier for a Christian to incorporate elements of Judaism into her life (after all, we both follow the Old Testament) than it is for a Jew to incorporate Christianity into her life. But that seemed like an excuse, not an answer. I was compelled to ask myself what I was afraid of.

Ten years ago, I probably feared that Lee would ignore my Judaism. More importantly, part of me probably was afraid that I'd ignore my Judaism—I wouldn't become Christian, but it couldn't hurt to put up a tree, some mistletoe and a stocking. Chanukah is just a minor holiday, so why bother celebrating?

Of course, this did not happen and I no longer fear it happening. I'm only sorry that it took me so many years to realize it. Now I feel more comfortable to encourage Lee to celebrate her traditions at home and to explain their meanings to me. We are able to compare and contrast our religions and their importance in our lives. Encouraging her to put up a Christmas tree may seem like a minor act, but what I learned about trust, openness, diversity and celebration in the process made it well worth it.

Anyone interested in participating in an interfaith couples discussion group or chavurah, please call me at 386-7876.

—Robin Leonard, Vice President

Assessment

In a few weeks, you will receive your building assessment bill. You may wonder where this money goes or what exactly warrants this additional finance request.

The answer is that there are ongoing building repairs and maintenance that are not always observable. One item you will notice is the replacement of the Oneg Room heater. (The present one finally quit on us and can no longer be repaired.) In the coming months, further articles in the *Forward* will inform you of other changes or repairs going on in and around our building.

—Jeffrey Miller, Building Chair

Our Aging Parents

Americans are living longer and we are finding ourselves parenting our parents. Maybe you are already facing this situation or are concerned that you will in the future. Unsure of what this may mean to you and your parents? Worried about how you will handle it? Want more information on what you can expect?

On Sunday, February 4 at 2 pm at Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, the Education Committee and the Jewish Family and Children's Service presents an opportunity to ask your questions and to find out what you want to know.

The Jewish Gaily Forward is published 11 times annually by Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 220 Danvers at Caselli, San Francisco, California 94114, (415) 861-6932. Permission to reproduce material is freely given, and credit would be appreciated.

Members of the Congregation receive the *Forward*. For a donation of \$12/year, non-members will receive the *Forward*.

All newsletter copy should be typed, double-spaced and is due no later than the date of the Va'ad meeting. It should be sent to the synagogue office, marked to the attention of the *Forward*. All material is subject to editing; material will not be returned.

Members of the Newsletter Committee are Alita Rosenfeld & Howard Blechman, co-chairs, Leonard Brill, Joan Gelfand, and Lane Schickler (general editorial and production), Michael Bettinger and Shirley Liberman (photographers), Rick Wilson (advertising coordinator), Allan Brandstein, Frank Hyman, Alex Ingersoll, Hal Podgur, Sam Thal and Eli Weinstein (distribution). The *Forward* is typeset by David Lester, Mouse Type Inc., and printed by Lou Greene.

Display Ads are \$15 per column inch for non-members and \$10 per column inch for members, with discounts available for size and frequency. Ads should be camera ready; any ads that require typesetting, camera and/or artwork will be subject to a one-time production charge.

Classified Ads are \$5 for up to 20 words, plus \$1 for each 10 additional words. No personals accepted.

Payment must accompany ad and should be sent to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 220 Danvers at Caselli, San Francisco, California 94114, marked attention *Forward* advertising. The advertising deadline is the second Monday of the month. The *Forward* reserves the right to reject any ad for reasons of taste.

A Tale of Six Cities

(Continued from page 1)

The best of the conference was the informal networking around the lunch table and at breaks. I am a great admirer of those I met who are doing their good work despite the indifference of their governing bodies and the hostility of their leaders to people with AIDS. These men and women take seriously the prophetic imperative to pursue justice and love mercy. They are filled with the same idealism that impelled "righteous gentiles" to save Jewish lives during the Holocaust, despite the indifference of church leaders.

The main speaker was Dr. June Osborne, chair of the National Commission on AIDS, who confirmed what we suspected—that things are no better under Bush than they were under Reagan. In fact, with the departure of Surgeon General Koop, the situation is worse. The administration—and increasingly, the Congress—is indifferent to AIDS. (The commission even released its first report early to try to get their attention.) As the epidemic rages unabated, human and financial resources are depleted. We simply have to work even harder.

Our UAHC AIDS Committee will meet in Los Angeles March 26. On March 25, Rabbi Marder (formerly rabbi of our sibling Los Angeles congregation) and I will conduct an all-day session with the chairs of the various regional committees, getting them energized and focused. The committee will have a booth at the International AIDS Conference here in June, and we've contributed \$500 to the Names Project to help send the quilt to Israel.

In the good news department: two more "outreach" congregations—Dallas and Philadelphia—have applied for membership in the UAHC. And "mainstream" Congregation B'rith Kodesh of Rochester, N.Y., just voted 117-16 to accept gay and lesbian couples as full members, extending the same privileges as to heterosexual couples. This happened only a week after we passed a Biennial resolution calling on congregations to do just that!

Finally, a ray of hope from Prague: Three years ago I went with a Federation "mission" to visit the Jewish communities in Czechoslovakia. The government-appointed "leader" of the com-

munity was our constant guide and companion.

As we entered the Alte Neue Shul in Prague for Shabbat services, the congregation grew quiet, obviously anxious about the "government Jew" in their midst. I had a copy of the Sha'ar Zahav Shabbat morning prayerbook with me, and when the service was over the man sitting next to me asked to see it. He went through it slowly, then asked if he could have a copy. "I am trying to prepare my grandson to become a Bar Mitzvah," he said, "and the Hebrew in your book is transliterated. He could learn from this." Moved almost to tears, I gave it to him.

Last week the Jewish community of Prague had its own *perestroika*; the government's leader was ousted and the community elected one of their own. The new president is my friend with the prayerbook. May he, and they, go from strength. And in the coming year, may we see a miracle in the fight against AIDS equal to the miracle of Prague.

—Mike Rankin

Want to sell a dining room set?
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Sell a car?
Place an ad in the classifieds?
For more information, contact
Rick Wilson, 647-3258.

Harvey Levine • 1947-1989 •

Sha'ar Zahav member Harvey Levine died this past November 13. Harvey was a man with tremendous appetites—for food, for experience, for nature, for insight and spiritual experience, and for life. A visionary man, Harvey had ideas and schemes and ongoing projects. He was always filled with things to do and people to connect with, such that he was consistently and seriously late for his appointments. His essentials for life were a briefcase, a newspaper and a telephone.

Harvey had a dramatic flair. On a trip through the redwoods, he insisted on getting out of the car and lying down at the foot of every tree in order to see the view from a different perspective. He liked to dress up and clown around. For many years he had a concession at the Renaissance and Dickens Faires. Before his illness, he enjoyed his work as a salesman at Computerland.

He is survived by his mother, Helen Traegar, his children, Jacob and Eve, his brother Matthew, his close friend Judy, as well as other beloved friends.

Harvey wanted to find meaning in what he was going through and thus pushed others to consider the questions that he found so important. He spent the last weeks of his life doing his best to reconcile and make peace with all the people in his life. May his memory be for blessing.



Roberta Achtenberg at the Parenting Forum. Photo by Chana Pollack.

Passing

This column is adapted from my sermon on International AIDS Day, December 1, 1989. The Torah portion for that Shabbat was Genesis 25:19-28:9.

When was the last time you had to pass as something you are not? What was the closet you hid in? Was it just for an hour or a brief conversation, or is it something you hide all the time? Do you hide in the world at large, or here at Sha'ar Zahav?

Was it your sexuality? Your Jewish identity—as a convert, Jew, or someone unclear where his or her religious identity lies? Was it health—because you are afraid to say you have AIDS, or are positive or were fearful to acknowledge you are negative or have never been tested—or even aren't at risk at all? How about your feelings—not just "who" you are but "where" you are? Have you ever felt that you must emotionally "pass" as feeling other than you do or that you could not come in the door comfortably because you were in the wrong "place"?

Most of us are quite experienced at this. Jewish people and lesbian and gay people share a history of dealing with the need to "pass," setting the limits of our deception, inventing disguises and dealing with the consequences. Jewish history is filled with the stories of Jews who wrestled with how to pass, each balancing the need for survival against maintaining one's own integrity. This week's Torah portion, *Toldot*, contains three tales about deception, passing, covering up and anger. Although nominally the biography of Isaac and Rebekah, most of the portion's drama turns on the conflict between their two (not especially nice) children—the twins Jacob and Esau. Jacob and Esau appear to be complete opposites of each other. Esau is a hunter, tough and blunt; Jacob is domestic, quiet and passive aggressive. My teacher, Prof. Norman Cohen, has written that Jacob and Esau can be "midrashically" understood as two sides of the same person, different aspects of one personality. They remind me of a drag queen with a variety of different styles.

The most famous story is also the most important deception. Jacob, the crafty, smart, campy queen, is at home, cooking up a plate of *nouvelle* red beans. Esau who is too butch and impractical to

know how to cook, comes home famished from a day of hunting to provide food for the family, and sees the pot of beans on the stove. "Let me have some," Esau insists. Jacob holds back. "Sell me your birthright," he demands; "give me the privileges you were born with, then I will give you the food you want." Esau is so hungry he could die. "What do I care for my birthright now?" How can he worry about the future when he is worried about death today? How do you sell your spiritual inheritance anyway in exchange for the bare necessities of survival! (I'll come back to explore the precise nature of this deception in a moment.)

The second story of deception is a brief interlude during which Isaac insists upon passing off Rebekah, his wife, as his sister in order to get safely past the jealous king. The outrageous violence against women implicit in this story I will only note and leave to discuss at another time. What does stand out is the continuing pattern of deception. In order to survive, the true nature of the relationship is covered up. This portion appears to advance a world view that deception and lies are essential for survival. Where is Rebekah in this short tale? What is her experience? We are not told. The events move so quickly there is no room for emotions at all.

The third deception takes place at Isaac's deathbed. He summons Esau, his firstborn son, to receive his special blessing. But Jacob, with the cooperation of Rebekah (perhaps in revenge for Isaac's earlier cover up), dresses up in Esau's clothes and puts on animal skins to smell and feel like Esau to his father Isaac, who is now blind. As an ultimate insult to his brother, Jacob prepares the one dish that Esau does know how to cook and brings it with him in order to secure the blessing from his father. But Isaac is not so easily fooled. The blind in Aramaic are called *s'gie nahor*, of great light, and though without vision, he does not lack insight. Isaac is resigned to giving Jacob Esau's blessing but he pauses first and declares: *Ha-kol Ya'akov v' ha-yadayim yadei Esav*—"The voice is the voice of Jacob but the hands are the hands of Esau."

Let's go back to the beginning of the story. Esau comes home, starving, ready

to die and is asked to trade in his birthright for his next meal. How often has our dignity been exchanged for the food we eat? What are we required to give up in order to secure the essentials of survival?

Today (December 1, 1989), International AIDS Day, we are witness to and part of a deception that we must exchange our birthright for our survival. What do we give up today for that bowl of beans, for the little plastic vial with the childproof cap and the beeper that goes off every four hours? First, our economic self-sufficiency. AZT—for those who can tolerate it—still costs \$6,312 or more a year. Do you know that more than 50 percent of the world supply is sold from the Walgreen's at the corner of 18th and Castro? This morning, demonstrators protesting the high cost of AZT at Burroughs/Wellcome in Burlingame (where the United States supply is manufactured) were arrested. As I watch Tom Brokaw tell me every evening how communism has failed in Eastern Europe, I would like to remind him that our capitalist economy surely is a failure in the delivery of health care in an equitable and just fashion.

I spoke with a friend last night. He is trying to get onto the DDI trial, but his

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Kaiser Brunch



1. CSZ member Randy Weiss and his string quartet.
 2. Preparations: Alex Ingersoll; kibbitzing: Frank Hyman and David Stein.
 3. Schmoozers: Leslie Bergson and Allan Berenstein.
- Photos by Michael Bettinger.

Library Notes

Books, Books, Books

It is a new year, indeed a new decade, and we want to encourage all our members to make good use of our library. The library has a different look; since this time last year, it has grown considerably. We easily have twice the number of books. The children's section which was virtually non-existent, now has about fifty titles covering a variety of topics of interest to several different age groups. Last year we did not have a check-out system; this year instructions are posted and simple.

We want to take this opportunity to thank those who have contributed time and books such that our library has been able to grow as it has. Lin Turner has been working with us almost every Monday night. We could not have accomplished all this without the guidance of the Library Committee: Bill Goldstein, Mark Mackler, and Jonathan Schwartz. A special thanks to Leslie Bergson for reviewing *Twice Blessed* last month. Invaluable has been the advice and encouragement of Rabbi Kahn and our office manager, Jenny Helbraun. Book donors have included Rabbi Kahn, Jonathan Schwartz and Catherine Stether (who donated the fascinating *Mandarin, Jews and Missionaries*.)

Of note: The November/December issue of *Tikkun* has an editorial which encourages the Central Conference of American Rabbis to openly ordain gay and lesbian rabbis. This magazine, which has supported us in the past, is subscribed to by the library. It recently won an award from *Utne Reader* for its essays.

The schedule for the Fiction Connection for the next few months is as follows:

January 24, at the Capri on Market Street, discussion of *Twice Blessed* by Balka and Rose;

February 21, at the Patio on Castro Street, discussion of *Counterlife* by Philip Roth;

March 21, at the China Court on Castro Street, discussion of *Night* by Elie Wiesel.

All of the meetings are on Wednesday and start at 7:30 pm. We encourage anyone who is interested to join us.

—Bill Ashley-Dobbin, Librarian

December Va'ad Report

The meeting began with the customary call to order and check in. After correction and approval of the November minutes, Rabbi Kahn discussed the following quote from Genesis for his D'var Torah: *The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau*. He reviewed the items in his written report, which included updates on earthquake response, pre-school, adult education, and the Camp Swig adult and family weekend planned for March 23-24, 1990.

Ben Schalit offered several explanatory comments and answered various questions about the monthly financial statement. There was a bit of discussion about reinvestment of funds when certificates of deposit (CDs) mature, which ended in a motion regarding the reinvestment of funds from the Citicorp CD maturing on January 4, 1990. The Va'ad encouraged Ben to seek out the best rates and terms while maintaining sufficient liquidity to meet our expenses.

Eric Keitel reported that we are still looking for a contractor to make our new pushke boxes. Repairs authorized by the Va'ad several months ago for various items, including soundproofing the rabbi's office and fixing the windows and the front door, are under way. Eric also gave us the happy news that a member has offered to underwrite the mailing costs for our Long-Range Planning questionnaire. Last, he informed us that Elizabeth McLachlan has been hired as our office secretary, and will begin on Thursday, December 14.

Jenny Helbraun reviewed building matters, took various corrections to the calendar, and showed Va'ad members where the cutoff valves were located in the basement for both the water and gas. Members were also told about the main gas and water valves located in the street outside of the building, in case the basement is not accessible after a disaster.

Eric Keitel reported that Claudia Bernard, Steve Greenberg and Scott Mezisrano have investigated alternate locations for our High Holy Day services, and nothing reasonable is available for 1990. However, alternatives will be explored for 1991 and beyond. Gail Friedlander informed the Va'ad that she, Eric Keitel and Allan Berenstein have begun working on Advance Follow-Up, and are organizing a one-day Mini-Advance, which will be held on Saturday,

February 3. This event will have the High Holy Days as the main topic of discussion and will also include a workshop on conflict management. The Long-Range Planning Committee's questionnaires will be reviewed prior to this date so that members' feedback can be included in the discussion. Gail also mentioned that "Growth/Mainstreaming" has been proposed as the umbrella topic for the 1990 Advance, to be discussed when planning begins for that event.

Robin Leonard reported that our cookbook sales have been very good and should exceed 1,000 books for the first year of the second printing. The Va'ad discussed two outstanding debts from bookstores no longer in business and Robin was authorized to pursue them for collection. She also informed us that Susan Unger's previous employer, MMI Direct, has generously allowed us to continue storing our cookbooks with them, an arrangement that began when Susan was still working there.

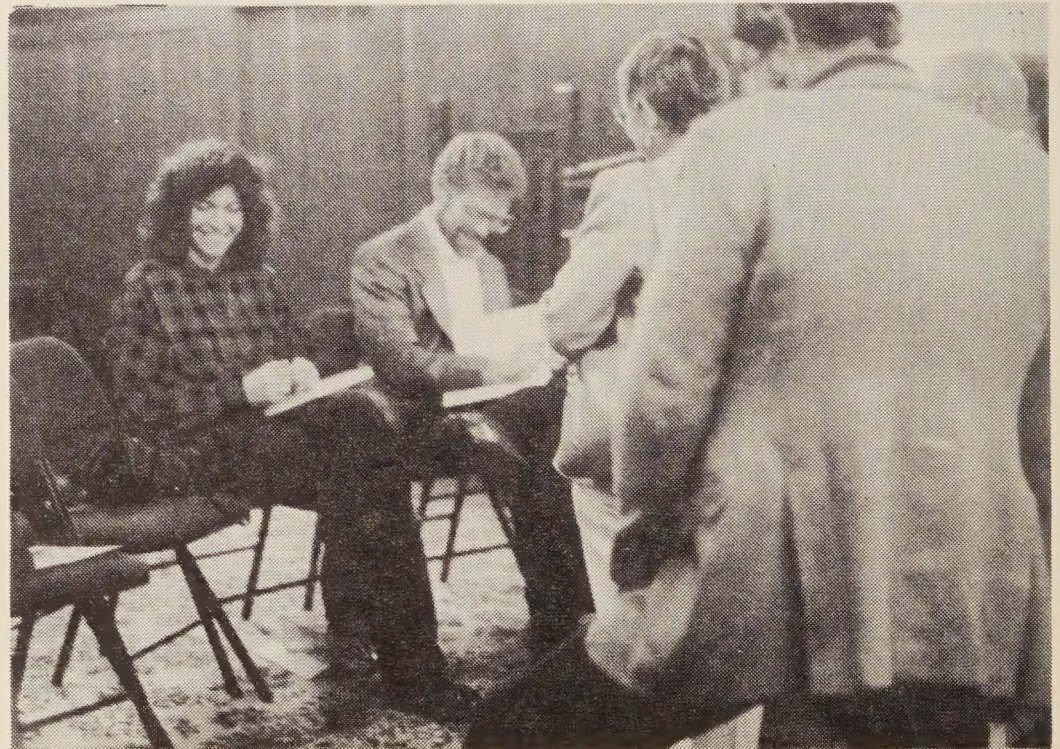
Paul Cohen attended the meeting representing the Bikkur Cholim Committee, and led a discussion about the Earthquake Relief donation of \$500 to Project Open Hand which came from that committee's fund. The appropriate use of the general fund versus restricted funds—both in principle and in this very

specific instance—was at issue. The discussion was thought-provoking and as a result, Robin Leonard will be reviewing Va'ad minutes from previous years to document the original intent with which restricted funds were established. The Va'ad voted on a motion to change the source of this donation to the General Fund, but it did not pass and the Bikkur Cholim fund remained its source.

Peter Vishniac presented a grant proposal for pre-school children's education which he developed in conjunction with Rabbi Kahn. Two funding agencies with deadlines in December and January have expressed interest, and the Va'ad reviewed Peter's material. Members were in agreement that the program is worthy, consistent with our current work and established direction, and does not have funding available from elsewhere. A motion was passed authorizing Peter and Rabbi Kahn to pursue the two grants. However, considerable discussion took place about the timing of the presentation, the process by which such information is brought to the Va'ad, and the appropriate communication protocols. As a result Jose Luis Moscovitch volunteered to serve as a liaison between the Va'ad and Peter and the Rabbi.

Mike Rankin, our UAHHC liaison, gave

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Andy Rose, signing copies of *Twice Blessed*, while Judy Schwartz counts the house.
Photo by Chana Pollack

Va'ad Report

(Continued from page 6)

his report and informed the Va'ad that Richard Inlander has taken Mike's place with the President's Council of the Northern California Region of the UAHC. He told members that a leader of the Jewish community in Czechoslovakia is using our Shabbat handbook to prepare for his Bar Mitzvah. He went down a long list of events scheduled for January, February and March; be sure to check his UAHC report in the January *Forward* for dates and details. He ended by speaking of the recent one-day meeting of the AIDS Interfaith Network in Atlanta, where the attendees included members of fundamentalist congregations who face everything from indifference to hostility from their own leadership.

Merry Luskin, chair of the membership committee, presented 11 new individuals and one family, and they were unanimously voted in as members. Following a closed session on personnel issues, the meeting was adjourned just before 9:30 pm with a fast but heartfelt rendition of Oseh Shalom.

—Gail Friedlander, Recorder

HIV+ Veterans

A support group for HIV-positive veterans is being led in Oakland by CSZ member Mike Rankin. There is no charge, but you must be a veteran. The group meets at 2221 Martin Luther King Way in Oakland, a few blocks from the 19th Street BART station. It meets Monday from 5:30 to 7 pm. Those interested should call Mike at 273-7331.

MEMBERSHIP

Check it out.
Besides the benefits
it feels good to be
part of Sha'ar Zahav.

New Members

The Membership Committee is pleased to announce that our congregation gained several new members and friends in December. A warm welcome to the latest people to join our family:

Lynda Cantor

Alison Cohen

Debra Chasnoff, Kim Klausner, and
'Noah Chasnoff

Richard Goldwasser

Shuli Goodman

Deborah Hoffman

Laurie Mintz

Katherine Simon

Lina Zerbarini

Laurie Zimet

New members are welcomed and honored at Friday night services on the last Friday of the month. By making them feel a part of our family, we can all help to show our new members that they have a valuable place at Sha'ar Zahav.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Anniversary

1 Paul Schwartz & Philip Gomez

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Birthdays

1 Steven James Hanely
4 Maggie Rochlin
6 Nathan E. R.
8 Carol Heller
9 Max Rossoff Nichols
11 Ellen Giersen
12 Florence Nacamulli
12 Tiela Chalmers
13 Amy Blasenheim
19 Mike Rankin
19 Yolande Schneeman
20 Eileen Linda Lynette
21 Johanna Johnson
23 Julia Carol Hanely
25 Beth Berkelhammer
25 Dana Lear
25 Neil E. Hart
27 Maacah M.
30 Aaron Cooper
30 Ruth A.
30 Jenny Helbraun

Tu B'Shevat Hike

Everyone is welcome to join the Israel Chavurah for a hike (tiyul) to celebrate the New Year for Trees—Tu B'Shevat. Join us as we observe the gradual awakening of the land from the grip of winter and, if we're lucky, find the first blossoms on an almond tree.

The date will be Sunday, February 11. The time and location will appear in the February *Forward*. Call Ron Lezell (824-4449) for more details.

CSZ at Camp Swig

Save these dates: March 23–25! The Adult Education Committee is planning an exciting, restful, prayerful, inspirational, beautiful, intimate, warm, lively and spiritual weekend at UAHC Camp Swig for those three days. Camp Swig is located off Highway 9 near Saratoga in a beautiful setting. Everyone will be welcome and there will be special activities for all ages. Watch for details in next month's *Forward*.

Potluck and Slides

The entire congregation is invited by the Membership Committee to a potluck honoring new members who joined in November, December, and January. It will be on Sunday afternoon, January 21 from 4 to 7, at the home of Eric Keitel and Aaron Cooper, 53 Digby St., in San Francisco. Mike Rankin will show the latest edition of the entertaining and inspiring Sha'ar Zahav Slide Show. See Sha'ar Zahavniks in action at great moments in our history!

Last year, the January potluck took place on the day of the Superbowl, so many people had a conflict about missing such an important sporting event. We have checked with the San Francisco '49ers and they assure us that there will be no playoff games that day, with the Superbowl happening the following week. For those of you who may feel shy at social events, these potlucks traditionally are very comfortable and welcoming. We hope to see you there for a relaxed afternoon of eating, viewing, and getting to know one another. Call 664-4520 for information.

—Merry Luskin, Membership Committee

Rabbi's Column

(Continued from page 4)

T-cells have to be below a certain number to get onto the trial. He was wondering, do I hope that I am sick enough to get access to the limited supply of this drug? Do you lie about your blood work, your medical history, or your symptoms in order to get the drug? What lengths do we go to in order to get that bowl of porridge? (I could die, says Esau, without it). (While the company has agreed to make the drug available for compassionate use to those who are ineligible for the official trials, there are strict restrictions on who may receive it.) Am I wrong to wonder if the manufacturers of DDI are motivated less by medical concerns than the fear that too much be given away for free? How many other promising treatments are held up in patent disputes, university, hospital and corporate politics, and sheltered competition to protect other investments?

The deception is not the sale of the birthright itself under duress, but the lie that you can give it away. When Esau is told "you made a fair exchange" he needs to rise up and declare that the market is immoral! We are so busy struggling just to survive, to figure out the proper treatment course and to mourn and grieve, that we overlook the continual injustice of the system and our ongoing oppression.

Tristano Palermino, a CSZ member and my beloved friend, died November 22. When Tristano went to address a group of clergy at a service in Grace Cathedral, he donned his bright satin boxing shorts and boxing gloves. He chained himself to the White House fence wearing his T-shirt "Ronald Reagan is killing me." He often said, "I am not dying of AIDS, I am dying of red tape." When Tristano died, he was at peace with God and surrounded by loving friends. He was sustained throughout his illness by his rage and righteous anger. While he made peace with his illness, he was never at peace with injustice.

Are we not both Esau and Jacob? And is it not possible that they are one and the same? Depending on our needs one moment, we are scheming, desperate and hungry, the crafty negotiator faced with impossible choices. Do we not disguise ourselves as Jacob does, dressing up in macho drag, conspiring in order to secure the patriarch's blessing? We wear

our hardened skins and carry our armored defense mechanisms in order to pass and survive in the world.

After nine years of living in the storm that is the AIDS crisis, we are still passing. We pass when we are out in the world; we pass with our friends. How many people called you to discuss the earthquake? How many people have called in the last year to ask how you are coming through the epidemic that has not even begun to stop shaking for a moment, and we are living in the epicenter?

We pass with ourselves. Who can let out daily the rage and pain and grief which has no limit? What does it mean to lose 10, 20 or 40 friends?

The Torah tells us: "The hands are the hands of Esau, the voice is the voice of Jacob." We are "doing" fine; we are accomplishing, building and advancing. Underneath, though, behind the disguise, someone is calling out.

I am Jacob and I am Esau and I believe you are too. I am carrying on—just as you are. And I am proud of all that we do—in our diverse lives and here together: our programs and our services, and our activities and our school and the *Forward* and all the rest. But for too long, I believe, our rage and our grief have gone largely unacknowledged and unspoken. I suspect that we are afraid that if we let it out, nothing will be able to contain it.

We fear, I think, that if we let out our grief it will eradicate everything we have accomplished. (And not just that "everything" outside will come down, but ourselves as well.) I cannot promise you what will happen, but I know much of our spiritual and emotional resources are invested in containing our rage and our grief. I would like us to become more okay with "things" or one another being "not okay." Like Jacob, we wonder: if our true self is revealed, will we receive the blessing?

What does the "voice of Jacob" say? *Sh'ma Yisrael*. Listen. If we cannot speak of our pain and our anger, our grief and our loss in this place, where can we speak? If not here, then where? *Sh'ma Yisrael*—let this synagogue be a place where we listen to one another, where our true selves need not be concealed, and where we find blessing.

—Rabbi Yoel Kahn

Volunteers Needed

The Jewish Community Federation's Super Sunday Fundraising Event will take place this year on Sunday, February 11. If you would like to volunteer at this event, please call Richard Sinkoff at 648-3655. Volunteers are needed to staff phone lines, stuff envelopes, etc. We hope to have a large Sha'ar Zahav contingent, so call Richard for more details.

Additional High Holiday Contributions, 5750

Miriam Abrams, Marcia Iris Baum, Mike Brodsky and Danielle Cusher, Eileen Dunn, Betsy Ferber, Jill Ginsberg, Allan and Tybil Kahn, Ida Kuluk, Martin Kupferman, Walt Leiss, Ivan Livschitz, Judith Marantz, Carole Migden, Cathy Miller, Sally Miller and Peg Keranen, Andrew Nick, Jack Phillips, Doreen Querido, Jerry Rosenstein, Andrea Saul, Alan R. Schwartz, Mauri Schwartz, Kate Sharp and Alita Rosenfeld, Cathy J. Steirn, Alisa Surkis, Barbara Tobin and Dana Vinicoff.



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Can I Deduct It?

The Commission on Synagogue Management suggested Sha'ar Zahav explain recent IRS clarifications concerning donations. CSZ must inform the IRS of the correct value of a donation, as well as the legal consequences of a transfer of property (Treas. Reg. 170(e)(1XB)). The ultimate burden of proof, however, resides with the donor.

Simply stated, you cannot just deduct the value of any item received.

- **Deductible** are, for example, dues, High Holiday contributions, donations to the general fund and to restricted funds, or briefly, any contribution from which you do not benefit directly, such as "sponsorship of Seder dinners for the community at large" or contributions for general education.

- **Not deductible** are, for example, raffle tickets, Seder dinners for yourself and named individuals, cookbooks, gift shop items purchased, fees for education or Kadimah for yourself or your children, Chanukah or Purim admission and/or food, etc.

A simple illustration: You send \$120 for four Seder meals. Two of these are for your lover and yourself, and the other two are intended for "sponsorship for the community." You can deduct only \$60 as a charitable donation (the share for the community).

Another example: Members contribute four dinners to the Silent Auction; they can deduct the cost of these dinners as a charitable deduction. The fortunate bidders, however, *cannot* deduct the fair value of these dinners. They can deduct any donation above the fair value.

Travel to conventions, meetings, etc. is deductible only if the sole purpose for the trip (and the working hours spent) are for the charitable organization.

The above is based on excerpts from information received. Consult your accountant or legal adviser for more detailed information.

—Jerry Rosenstein, Finance Chair

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Gay/Lesbian Wedding Book

WIM Publications, black-owned, lesbian-feminist publishers is seeking contributions for the Lesbian and Gay Wedding Book, a nonfiction pictorial that will document same-sex unions. WIM wishes to publish a good cross-section of the community's multi-racial, multi-cultural ceremonies and would like to go to press early spring 1990. WIM invites couples to share their joy and to deal homophobia a blow by submitting by certified mail three to five well-chosen photographs from the ceremony (either black and white or color), a 500-1,000 word description of their love story/decision to commit their lives in public ritual, and a copy of their vows. Guidelines are available. Don't miss this chance. Make the world know we take our relationships and commitments seriously. Contributors will receive a fee or a percentage of the book sales (to be negotiated). Write to 3601 Crowell Road #100, Turlock, CA 95380 or contact Dr. SDiane Bogus at (209) 667-0966.

Ritual Feedback

Do you have a comment on last Friday night's service? Did you especially enjoy the musical content at the service several weeks ago or do you have a recommendation for improving Shabbat morning services?

The Ritual Committee welcomes your suggestions and constructive criticism. If you have any comments or questions regarding ritual matters please contact Ora Prochovnick at 334-2134, or feel free to approach her or other members of the Ritual Committee with your ideas.

Food Bank

Please, don't forget our brothers and sisters in need. Keep filling the shul's collection baskets with non-perishable food and other household items for the SF AIDS Foundation's residence program.

Legal help.

In contracts and leases,
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Yahrzeits

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Glenn Childress, brother of Joyce Amburgey</p> <p>1 Rusty Smith, friend of Bernard Pechter</p> <p>1 Fannie Silverman, grandmother of Sharyn Saslafsky</p> <p>2 George Samuels, father of Shelley Samuels</p> <p>2 (Tevet 5) Louis Charney, father of Philip Charney</p> <p>3 (Tevet 6) Bayla Schneidman, sister of Daniel Chesir</p> <p>3 Mark Pearlman, friend of Steven & Florence Nacamulli</p> <p>4 (Tevet 7) Jacob Cohen, father of Carol Cohen</p> <p>8 (Tevet 11) Frema Weinstein, mother of Eli Weinstein</p> <p>10 Yetta Grossman, grandmother of Lane Schickler</p> <p>10 (Tevet 13) Isaac Judah Comerchero, father of Sarah Comerchero</p> <p>10 Barbara Gruen</p> <p>11 Bill Chalmers, father of Tiela Chalmers</p> <p>12 Adeline Brilliant, aunt of Allan Gold</p> <p>13 Steve Schwartz, brother of Sunny Schwartz</p> <p>13 Marion Howes, grandmother of Marion Trentman</p> <p>14 Sam Shaber, brother of David Shaber</p> <p>15 Rose Bud Macks, grandmother, Judy Macks</p> <p>15 Alice Florsheim Heller, mother of Carol Heller</p> <p>15 (Tevet 18) Max Gelfman, grandfather of Henry Mach</p> <p>17 (Tevet 20) Jack W. Heller, father of Hal Heller</p> <p>17 Jeffrey Dixon Byers, companion of David Israels</p> <p>17 Iris Medina del Moral, step-mother of Rosalinda del Moral</p> <p>18 Sophie Rosten, mother of Jerry Rosenstein</p> <p>18 Lewis Edward Greenwald, brother of Susan Greenwald</p> <p>18 (Tevet 21) Ben Blachman, grandfather of Benjamin Blachman Forshay and father of Marsha & Blanche Blachman</p> <p>20 Ralph Douglass, father of Sue Douglass</p> <p>20 Anna Kimerling, grandmother of Allyce Kimerling</p> <p>20 Sophie Sagorsky, grandmother of Marc Lipschutz</p> | <p>20 Ralph Douglass, grandfather of Sonia Douglass</p> <p>21 (Tevet 24) Avrum Ya'kov Berenstein, grandfather of Allan Berenstein</p> <p>23 Estelle Lieberman, mother of Beatrice Lieberman and grandmother of Ma'ayan Lieberman</p> <p>24 Bill Dobkins, brother of Jim Dobkins</p> <p>25 Dan Druid, friend of Alita Rosenfeld</p> <p>25 Mignon Ginsburg, grandmother of Pamela Ruskin</p> <p>26 Cheryl Orvis, member of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav</p> <p>28 Michael J. McCormick, Sr., father of Michael J. McCormick, Jr.</p> <p>29 (Shevat 3) Sol Weinstein, father of Eli Weinstein</p> <p>29 Joseph Burke, father of Ken Burke</p> <p>29 Phillip Kalis, father of Betty Kalis</p> <p>31 (Shevat 5) Max Rosenstein, father of Jerry Rosenstein</p> <p>31 Scott Swisher, brother of Rebecca Swisher</p> |
|---|--|

Naches

Congratulations to **Amy Markowitz** and **Robert Wachter** on their marriage which took place Sunday, November 26.

Congratulations to **Richard Inlander**, who was recently named chair of the Northern California UAHC President's Council.

Condolences

We at Congregation Sha'ar Zahav extend our sympathy to the following members who have suffered a recent loss:

To **Donald Abrams** on the loss of his lover, Mark Henry.

To **Al Baum** on the loss of his friend, Ralph Coffman.

To **Arlene Hoffman** on the loss of her mother, Pearl Hoffman.

To **Richard Inlander** on the loss of his friend, Joan Graham.

To **the congregation** on the loss of its member, Harvey Levine.

To **the congregation** on the loss of its members, lovers David Glassnberg and Tristano Palermino.

Free Voting Records

The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism in Washington, D.C., regularly provides voting records of every member of Congress. In order to help congregants to become effectively involved in the upcoming legislative struggles on abortion rights, the center has now prepared a set of records focusing exclusively on how members voted on issues related to reproductive rights.

To receive a free copy of the center's general voting records or the special one on abortion rights for your elected officials write to: Abortion Rights Voting Records, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, 2027 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20036.

Dr. Diane Sabin

CHIROPRACTOR

3892 24th Street, San Francisco, CA 94114 415/826-8300

Contributions

Sha'ar Zahav welcomes all contributions, of all sizes, to mark any event, and to any of our funds. Contributions will be acknowledged in the *Forward* unless requested otherwise.

Donations were made to Sha'ar Zahav's funds in the past months by the following contributors:

AIDS Fund

Fr. John Mazitallo, S.J., in honor of all the Sha'ar Zahav members who work so diligently to serve those living with AIDS

Eric Reiner and Doug Breuster

Eve Meyer and Jim Edlin, in memory of Ron Green and Keenan Clark

Rachel Wahba, in loving memory of Jacob Schraeter

Jay Ladin, in honor of Rabbi Kahn

Stan Osofsky, in memory of his father, William Osofsky

General Fund

Perry Paker, in memory of Meyer Paker

Jerry Hipps and Sanford Friedman, in memory of David Gutterman

Richard P. Inlander, in honor of the doctors of Flight #995

David Shaber, in memory of Ruth Wishner

Rob Tat, in memory of Dr. David Gutterman

Temple Sinai, in honor of Dr. Michael Rankin speaking at Temple Sinai of Oakland

Kadimah Fund

Susan Greenspan and the Greenspan Family, in beloved memory of Fritz Greenspan, and in appreciation of Rabbi Kahn and the congregation

Caroline Isaacs and Randy Mayers, in memory of Caroline's uncle, Joseph Heimlich

Eve Meyer and Jim Edlin, in memory of Hans Meyer and Kenneth Edlin

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Eve Meyer and Jim Edlin, in honor of the first anniversary of their marriage

Al Baum, in memory of Ralph Coffman

Beverly Hewett, in appreciation of Rabbi Kahn and the congregation

Leonard M. Goldberg, in memory of Henry Mautner

Bikkur Cholim Fund

Betty Kalis, in memory of Esther Kalis

Bitachon Fund

Donald M. Cahen

Oneg Sponsors

During November onegs were sponsored by the following generous people:

- 10 Rabbi Yoel Kahn, in honor of Andy Rose
- 17 Sherie Koshover and Carol Roseman, in memory of Hyman Richshafer and Cyril Roseman

Synagogue Information

Rabbi Yoel Kahn

Officers:

President, Eric Keitel

Vice President, Robin Leonard

Treasurer, Ben Schalit

Recorder, Gail Friedlander

Va'ad (Board) Members:

Allan Berenstein

Leslie Bergson

Ann Biderman

Steve Greenberg

Merry Luskin

Jose Luis Moscovich

Alita Rosenfeld

Jonathan Schwartz

Dana Vinicoff

Committee Chairs:

Bikkur Cholim, Paul Cohen

Brotherhood, by committee

Building, Jeffrey Miller

Bylaws, Richard Inlander

Cemetery, Richard Inlander

Children's Chavurah, Lorraine

Locke-Nacamulli & Judith

Cohen

Cookbook Project, Sanford Friedman

Dinner Chavurah, Jerry Hipps

Education, by committee

Finance, Jerry Rosenstein

Israel Chavurah, Ron Lezell

Long-Range Planning, Tiela

Chalmers & Daniel Chesir

Membership, Merry Luskin

Newsletter, Howard Blechman &

Alita Rosenfeld

Oneg, Scott Mezistrano

Past Presidents Council, Don

Albert

Personnel, Irene Ogus

Public Relations, Sharyn

Saslafsky

Religious School, David

Gellman & Ida Kuluk

Ritual, by committee

Social Action, Jonathan Mesinger & Lisa Katz

Social Program, Marc Mencher

Spirituality Chavurah, Larry Wexler

Women's Chavurah, Ann Biderman

Office Personnel:

Manager, Jenny Helbraun

Secretary, Elizabeth McLachlan

Office Hours: Mon., Tue. 9-1; Wed, Thu, 9-5; Fri. 9-2.

Emergency Number: In an emergency, the Congregation can be contacted outside of office hours by calling 420-9718.

Services are held every Friday evening beginning at 8:15 pm (except as noted), with an Oneg Shabbat following services. Services are generally held on the last Saturday of each month at 10:30 am — check calendar for each month.

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav (Congregation of the Golden Gate) is located in the Upper Market District of San Francisco at 220 Danvers at Caselli, which is one block south of the intersection of 18th & Market streets. By public transport, take MUNI bus 33 Stanyan to 18th & Danvers and walk one block south on Danvers to Caselli.

Member Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Richard Inlander, Mike Rankin, Liaisons) and World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations (Robin Leonard, Liaison).

טובת - שבט

JANUARY

1 Monday 4 Tevet New Year's Day	10 Wednesday 13 Tevet	19 Friday 22 Tevet	26 Friday 29 Tevet
2 Tuesday 5 Tevet	11 Thursday 14 Tevet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30pm, Gift Shop open until 8:05pm 8:15pm, Services, Shemot, Torah Service, Mike Rankin and Leslie Bergson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30pm, Gift Shop open until 8:05pm 8:15pm, Services, Va'era, Rosh Chodesh Shevat, Jose Luis Moscovich, Lyssa Friedman and Rabbi Kahn, childcare available
3 Wednesday 6 Tevet	12 Friday 15 Tevet	20 Saturday 23 Tevet	27 Saturday 1 Shevat
4 Thursday 7 Tevet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service at Jewish Home for the Aged 7:30pm, Gift Shop open until 8:05pm 8:15pm, Services, Vayechi, Rabbi Kahn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kadimah Family Learning Day 9:30am, Kadimah 3pm, Library open until 5pm 	Chinese New Year (Horse) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30am, Kadimah 10:30am, Morning services, Va'era, Rosh Chodesh Shevat, Rabbi Kahn and Leslie Bergson 3pm, Library open until 5pm
5 Friday 8 Tevet	13 Saturday 16 Tevet	21 Sunday 24 Tevet	28 Sunday 2 Shevat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30pm, Gift Shop open until 8:05pm 8:15pm, Services, Vayigash, Susan Gelmis and Bill Schlichter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30am, Kadimah 3pm, Library open until 5pm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4pm, New Member Potluck, 53 Digby, San Francisco 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30am, Kaiser Brunch, Kaiser Hospital, San Francisco
6 Saturday 9 Tevet	14 Sunday 17 Tevet	22 Monday 25 Tevet	29 Monday 3 Shevat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:30am, Kadimah 3pm, Library open until 5pm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's Chavurah Skating Party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7pm, Gift Shop and Library open until 10pm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30am, Kaiser Brunch, Kaiser Hospital, San Francisco
7 Sunday 10 Tevet	15 Monday 18 Tevet	23 Tuesday 26 Tevet	30 Tuesday 4 Shevat
8 Monday 11 Tevet	16 Tuesday 19 Tevet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30pm, Back to the Sources II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30pm, Back to the Sources II 7:30pm, Intro to Judaism I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:30pm, Va'ad Meeting 7:30pm, Gift Shop and Library open until 10pm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30pm, Newsletter layout and proofreading, 1711 Castro, San Francisco 	24 Wednesday 27 Tevet	31 Wednesday 5 Shevat
9 Tuesday 12 Tevet	17 Wednesday 20 Tevet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30pm, Fiction Connection, <i>Twice Blessed</i>, at Capri Pizza, 2272 Market St. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30pm, Modern Jewish Philosophies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7pm, Newsletter editing, 1711 Castro, San Francisco 	18 Thursday 21 Tevet	25 Thursday 28 Tevet	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7pm, Membership Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:30pm, Ritual Meeting 	

2 Friday, February 2
7 Shevat

- 8:15pm, Services, Bo, Daniel Chesir and Winston Pickett